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ABSTRACT

America has never really been a fully functioning democracy, and there are now signs of further public retreat from the very concept of democracy. This book contains essays organized around the central tenets, practices, and issues of democracy and education. The essays address the following questions: (1) Why do we have public education in America? (2) What is its purpose? and (3) How do we make the practice of educating congruent with achieving these aims? Part 1 explains the history, philosophy, and political theory of democracy as education. Part 2 examines teaching and learning in classrooms; school organization and structure; co-reform of public schools and higher education; school governance; and board, district, and state policies. The third part looks at the social and economic context of schools and society, including wealth, life, curricula, postmodernism, religion, reason, secularism, free thought, and "constitutional hope." Part 4 examines race, gender, class, and culture as differences that help us to understand individuals. The fifth part is about changing classrooms and schools, teaching by listening to students, and confronting hierarchy and control. The final part is about the real renewal of America's schools, based on the fundamental hope of American citizens. An index is included. (Contains 228 references.) (LMI)

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